

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 39, 40 and 41 are pending. Claims 1-4, 6-8, 11, 12 and 16-38 have been canceled. Claims 39, 40 and 41 have been added. Claim 39 is independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Reasons for Entry of Amendments

At the outset, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered into the Official File in view of the fact that the amendments to the claims automatically place the application in condition for allowance.

In the alternative, if the Examiner does not agree that this application is in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered for the purpose of appeal. This Amendment reduces the issues on appeal by overcoming the Examiner's objection to the Specification and placing the claims in compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph. This Amendment was not presented at an earlier date in view of the fact that Applicant did not fully appreciate the Examiner's position until the Final Office Action was reviewed.

Drawings

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that the corrected or substitute drawings were received on July 11, 2003 and have been approved.

Specification Objection

The Examiner has objected to the specification because of various informalities. In order to overcome this objection, Applicant has amended the specification in order to correct the deficiency pointed out by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph

Claims 12, 16 and 19-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states that the original specification does not disclose "without determining whether data collisions have occurred", as recited in claims 12, 19 and 27.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 12, 19 and 27 have been canceled, thereby rendering the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§102/103

Claims 12, 16 and 19-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,555,189 to Yamazato et al. (Yamazato), claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Yamazato, claims 1-4, 6, 8, 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Yamazato in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,646,528 to Marcade et al. (Marcade), claim 7 stands rejected over Yamazato in view of Marcade as applied to claim 8, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,821,530 to Ledbetter, claims 31-36 stand rejected over Yamazato in view of Marcade and Ledbetter, claim 37 stands rejected over Yamazato in view of Marcade and Ledbetter and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,729,126 to Olek, and claim 38 stands rejected over Yamazato in view of Marcade and Ledbetter as applied to claim 31, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,748,684 to Sanchez. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-4, 6-8, 11, 12 and 16-38 have been cancelled, thus rendering the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102/103 moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Added Claims

Claims 39, 40 and 41 have been added for the Examiner's consideration.

Independent claim 39 recites a combination of elements in an external display device of a refrigerator, including a display unit on a door in the refrigerator, showing information on the state of the refrigerator, a sub control unit at the door, said sub control unit receiving and transmitting signals generated by pressing the key and controlling the display unit; and a main control unit at a main body of the refrigerator, said main control unit controlling operations of internal devices in the refrigerator and communicating with the sub control unit;

Applicant respectfully submits that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 39 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record.

Particularly, Yamazato discloses stand-alone terminal units 60, 160 and 260 (information processing means), which are manually connected to the refrigerator by a user at such times as deemed necessary to collect data relative to the operation of the refrigerator (see Yamazato, Fig.10). When data is to be collected, the first step in the process is to connect a terminal unit to the connector 50. This process is shown in the flow chart of Fig.12, and particularly in step S21. Clearly, the respective terminal units are not integrated with any physical part of the refrigerator, including a door thereof, but rather, they are retrieved by for use as needed by servicemen and workers (see Yamazato, Col.4, lines 1-5).

The display means 63 and keyboard 62 are integral parts of the terminal unit 60. Therefore, like terminal unit 60 of which they are a part, these auxiliary attachments are used at the discretion of servicemen and workers. This is consistent with the Examiner's admission that Yamazaki does not disclose a display unit on a door of a refrigerator. The Examiner relies on Marcade to supply the deficiency of Yamazaki. Applicant submits that Marcade cannot supply this deficiency.

In particular, the display unit of Yamazato performs a "request and receive" operation only (initiated manually by a serviceman), and is not subject to the control of any unit associated with the refrigerator (not controlled). More specifically, the display unit of Yamazato is not controlled by a sub-control unit at the door of a refrigerator (a feature of the newly added claims).

Similarly, the "display unit" of Marcade is also not controlled by a sub-control unit at the door of a refrigerator. The "display unit", as designated in Marcade, is comprised of LED's 38 and displays 40. Marcade provides for some control of the display unit by microcomputer 42 (main controller), but this is main-control, and not sub-unit control. No sub-control units are disclosed in terms of these displays.

Combining the Yamazato reference and the Marcade reference to produce a sub control unit at the door, said sub control unit receiving and transmitting signals generated by pressing the key and controlling the display unit is not

feasible. Neither does there exist any suggestion to combine these two references from within the references themselves. In summary, Yamazato is directed to a detached portable unit to be used for troubleshooting (not controlled), and Marcade is directed to a main controller for controlling refrigerator temperatures which utilizes a display (without a sub-control unit). It is also accurate to state that in Yamazato, internal devices are controlled by a main controller through a sub-controller and in Marcade, the display on a door is controlled by a main controller, whereas in the Applicant's claimed invention, the display unit is controlled by a sub-control unit communicating with a main control unit.

Therefore, neither Yamazato, nor Marcade teaches or suggests a sub control unit at the door, said sub control unit receiving and transmitting signals generated by pressing the key and controlling the display unit, as recited in independent claim 39.

Claims 40 and 41 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 39, and are therefore allowable based on their dependence from claim 39 which is believed to be allowable

Consideration and allowance of claims 39, 40 and 41 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw all of the objections and rejections.

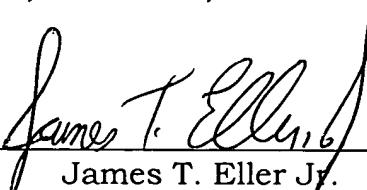
Should there be any outstanding matters which need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Percy L. Square (Registration No. 51,084) at (703) 205-8034, in the Washington D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment from or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, the extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASH & BIRCH, LLP

By



James T. Eller Jr.
Reg. No. 39,538

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22032-0747
(703) 205-8000

PLS
JTE/PLS/asc

Attachments

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The paragraph beginning on page 32, line 25, has been amended as follows:

--Where it is determined at step 417 that no trailer is received, the reception of data is continued until the trailer is received (Step 419). The received data is then temporarily stored in the buffer set in the procedure of FIG. [5A] 5C (Step 421). When the trailer is received, the subject microprocessor waits for a subsequent data processing because the current state corresponds to the state in which the current data reception is completed.--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 11, 12 and 16-38 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 39, 40 and 41 have been added.